

BRIEFING SUGGESTIONS

IAS/TR
Area Training Program
Americans Abroad Orientations

How to Make the Most of Your Everyday Contacts with _____s:
Developing effective interpersonal relations

The following list of promptings is not intended to be covered completely in any single briefing. It should be used with discretion for applicability to a given country or region, in order to point up the most significant problems of personal adjustment encountered by Americans in that area. At each blank, read the name of the pertinent foreign country or people.

A. IN GENERAL:

1. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES -

- a. What kinds of participation are open to you in the _____ community at the various levels? To what degree? How do these possibilities vary for different members of your family? For American government employees and their families as opposed to other groups of Americans in _____?
- b. What are the advantages for American government employees in participating in the _____ community (aside from the requirements of their work assignment)? For their dependents? in participating in certain areas of _____ life, such as cultural pursuits, education, sports, clubs, social services?
- c. How far can you safely isolate yourself from contact with the local culture and still do your work effectively? How bad is the problem of "The American Compound" in _____?
- d. How far should you immerse yourself in the local culture?

2. WAYS AND MEANS -

- a. What are some of the most practical steps for getting acquainted and accepted in _____ circles? for the employee? for the dependent?
- b. How do _____s in general react to efforts of Americans to do so?
- c. How can you best overcome your possible diffidence toward making a particular effort in this direction? How do you overcome or counter any distrust of the _____s? particularly any _____ distrust of foreign government personnel?
- d. What are the special personal security problems involved in normal times and in periods of crisis? How should they be handled?

B. IN PARTICULAR:

1. IN PUBLIC -

- a. What comprises acceptable public dress and general conduct for you in _____? In your neighborhood? At public entertainment? On business calls? In the daytime vs. evening? Travelling? How do _____s react to normal American dress and deportment?
- b. What are some of the common faux pas committed by Americans in public in _____? How serious are they in _____ eyes? How can they be avoided? What to do upon committing them?
- c. What types of _____ behavior may cause you to react unfavorably? How far should the American go in trying to understand these behavior patterns? How difficult is this process?
- d. Do you have an advantage in "acting American" and in what situations? When not?
- e. Specifically, how important is it for you to adapt to _____ standards of politeness and respect for local laws, practises for dealing with public officials and services, social usages, religious practices? (e.g., in tipping, accepting orders, observing taboos)
- f. What are some of the advantages you will derive from using the _____ language in public, even though poorly? What is the _____'s reaction to a foreigner speaking the _____ language, even poorly?
- g. How do you identify kinds of _____s? Classes? types to be cultivated or not?
- h. What are the commonest patterns of greetings and farewells?
- i. How should you approach a person on the street for information? in an office?
- j. What are some of the major problems you will encounter in the transportation field, as in regard to use of buses, streetcars, and taxis, unwritten rules of the road, etc.?
- k. What are some simple rules of thumb for coping with accidents and other forms of trouble?
- l. What are the normal ways of dealing successfully with taxi drivers, store keepers, porters and other public service people? what are the main errors Americans tend to make in dealing with others?

2. IN SOCIAL RELATIONS -

- a. What are some of the public and private occasions when you may readily meet _____s? Are there helpful cues for facilitating this process? What are some of the pitfalls?

- b. What are some of the relative advantages for you in using the language socially, even though poorly, in various situations, with various classes of _____, and on various types of subjects? What are some of the risks you run by not so using the _____ language?
- c. When is it particularly desirable to use an interpreter? What special cautions are there for the use of a _____ interpreter?
- d. What are some of the subjects which are useful for striking up a conversation with _____s (appropriate topics of "polite conversation")?
- e. What subjects are different classes of _____s likely to want to discuss at length?
- f. How does the _____'s behavior in conversation differ from the _____ American? What are some cues for use in developing the _____'s interest in you through conversation?
- g. How important is it for you to try to answer the _____'s questions about America and its foreign policy? What are the most difficult questions to answer, and how can they be handled?
- h. Which of his own personal qualities should an American accentuate in order to develop a _____'s friendship? What should he avoid?
- i. How long does it take ordinarily to make a "good friend" of a _____? How does one recognize that he is being "accepted" as a "good friend"?
- j. How may you enlarge your circle of _____ friends?
- k. What is necessary in order to gain the respect of _____s? What are some of the ways one loses this respect? How can it be regained?
- l. What might you do to make up for an offense to a _____? What are some of the indications that a _____ is offended? antagonistic? angry? happy? indifferent? other emotions?
- m. How do the obligations and benefits of friendship in _____ differ from what we expect in America?
- n. What are some of the special problems which may be encountered when you seek acceptance by a _____ group? (clubs and other associations). Are there special tips for solidifying your ties with such groups? pitfalls to be avoided? Ways of overcoming unfavorable rumors, the "cold shoulder," etc?
- o. What are some of the appropriate ways for you to entertain _____s? What are some of the social usages you must observe in this? How far may you follow the American way without embarrassing or offending the _____? What types of _____ may you safely bring together in a single group?
- p. What social usages should you try to observe when being entertained by the _____s? How tolerant are they likely to be of your faux pas? How may you try to repay _____s for different types of hospitality and other favors?

- q. Are there other social usages you should observe in order to be readily "accepted" by the _____? (e.g., re meeting them, joining or breaking away from various types of groups, drinking with them, talking with - or taking a personal interest in - those of the opposite sex, attending ceremonies and other activities with them, etc.)

3. IN RELATIONS WITH SERVANTS -

- a. What are some useful points to remember in selecting servants in _____?
- b. What are the do's and don't's for training and controlling them? Which member of your family should hold the ultimate control?
- c. What habits of _____ servants pose the greatest problems for Americans? What can practicably be done to meet these problems? In particular, are there serious problems of disloyalty, dishonesty, inefficiency? Do many _____ servants have some English?
- d. Should you avoid taking _____ servants into the family circle?
- e. Are there special security and health hazards with _____ servants?

4. FOR DEPENDENTS -

- a. What special tips are useful for dependents in their relations with _____ in the neighborhood? with next-door neighbors? Janitors? Delivery people? Peddlers? Storekeepers?
- b. What can the housewife do to achieve a reputation as a "good neighbor"?
- c. What special warnings are needed for bachelor males or females living in housing on the local economy?
- d. What special instructions are necessary for teen-agers? on dating problems? hospitality? freedom of movement through the community?
- e. How will children's opportunities for play differ from those in America? Are children handled differently in _____? How far need you go in conforming to local usage in this respect?